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ABSTRACT

Open enrollment is an essential feature of the Education Department of the International Institute in St. Louis, a refugee sponsoring group offering a wide range of social, housing, and medical services; job counseling and placement; and English as a second language classes. The institute allows students to begin a language training program immediately when time may be a crucial factor in becoming self-sufficient. The necessary features of an open enrollment program are that it is accessible, has specific and achievable goals, provides needed community orientation, is sucess-oriented, and is organized. Funding agencies want accountability, and teachers want the support, time, and peace to work. The program gatekeeper, in this case the receptionist, is critical in facilitating a smooth and speedy enrollment. Pre-placement assessment should underline the student's abilities and show what the program can do for him or her. Recordkeeping must be meticulous and accurate and reflect the funding agency's needs. Teaching goals must be clear to staff and students and allow for variations in learning style. A planned system of progress testing is valuable for students, teachers, and administrators. Students will evaluate the program themselves, and demonstrate their conclusions by their presence or absence. Open enrollment need not necessarily breed chaos, but it does require careful and thorough management. (MSE)

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TESOL '86.

Open enrollment: the professional management of chaos!

This paper will describe techniques of program management developed and used in the Education Department of the International Institute in St. Louis. These techniques and practices were developed to provide an environment where the needs of students, staff and funding agencies could be met smoothly and efficiently with a coherent overall program based on a facilitative management model.

Through the Voluntary Agency, the American Council for Nationalities Service(ACNS), the Institute acts as primary sponsor for refugees from South East Asia, the continent of Africa, Eastern Europe and the middle East. The agency offers a wide range of services that includes housing, cultural orientation, social services, immigration counseling, medical referrals, job counseling and job placement, and, under the heading of "education", 8 levels of ESL classes in the morning and 3 in the evening for a total of approximately 250 students. These classes are available on an open enrollment, open exit basis throughout the year. In the afternoons, GED classes offering basic education are available for those who have not finished high school, together with entry level Vocational ESL classes for those needing job skill training.

Staffing and Funding

Funding for the Education Department programs comes from the United Way, the Office of Refugee Resettlement, the State government and the Adult Basic Education program of the city of

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St. Louis. Because of this patchwork funding, only two of the ten staff of the Education Department are technically full time. All the rest of the paid staff are part time, although two part time jobs from different funding sources can often be put together so as to make an full-time job. Paid staff are supplemented with teams of volunteer teaching staff, who receive in-house training both in the theory and practice of teaching ESL. This patchwork funding, however, tends to promote job-insecurity which must be addressed in the overall management of the program.

Government's Goal for Refugees

The Education Department's classes are available to immigrants and visitors as well as refugee adults, but by far the largest part of the agency's efforts is directed toward helping refugees toward self-sufficiency.

The government defines self-sufficiency as living without any form of government subsidy, but, although the Education Department has the same goal, we would define self-sufficiency more broadly: as the ability to hold down a job, and to live without being limited in expressing legitimate needs and concerns and without being vulnerable to victimization.

Physical and Cultural Impediments to Learning

Let me define what we mean by open enrollment and what we mean by chaos.

Open enrollment: Its Composition and Rationale

By open enrollment, we are talking about a program which admits students whenever they come to enroll. It is more orderly to admit students at prescribed periods determined by the

calendar: terms, semesters, quarters, etc. For most refugees, waiting for the next semester to start is impractical for at least two reasons:

1. The period between their arrival in this country and the time when the government at federal or state level determines that they should be out at work, can be short -- very short. Sometimes there are only a few days between arrival and job placement. At best, the refugees have a few very short weeks to learn about their new community and some of the communication skills they are going to need to function successfully in it. Refugees arrive at fairly random intervals throughout the year. ESL classes must be accessible immediately if they are, in fact, going to meet the refugee needs and government requirements.

2. Many refugees develop reactive depression within a day or so of arrival in the United States. This depression may be manifested by withdrawal and inability to exercise appropriate care of themselves or their families. Or it may become apparent in a variety of psychosomatic ailments, e.g., migraine and stomach problems. Costly clinical diagnosis and treatment after onset can often be avoided by enrolling the refugees in ESL programs where they have prescribed tasks to do and so become active participants in their own welfare. At the same time they also meet others of their own culture and so can begin to share and understand their own predicament and begin strategies for coping with their new life style and environment.

Another student category, demanding instant access to the classroom, consists of those who have either quit their entry level jobs, or have been laid off or fired. Often those who have

been laid off or fired have been having communication problems with supervisors. These students may have only a few days or weeks before being recalled or placed in another job. Providing refugees with further ESL skills in the interim and the opportunity to upgrade their communication skills, can make the difference between ultimate self-sufficiency or spending their lives in a series of revolving-door entry-level job placements costing endless staff time, government dollars, and perpetuating life-long dependency.

Three categories of students have now been described as coming with immediate ESL training needs: 1. refugees new to the country, 2. students new to the country in danger of developing mental health problems, and 3. students seeking to upgrade their English skills while between jobs.

A program responsive to their needs must address at least seven factors:

1. The classes should be relatively easy to access, i.e., minimal time spent on paper work or just sitting around and waiting.

2. The program should meet each client's unique and individual needs, i.e., interview procedures need to be designed to reveal those factors of a student's abilities and needs which are going to be important in his placement. For example, if he is illiterate, the placement is more likely to succeed if he is not placed in a class that is heavily book-dependent. In addition, the interview procedures need to be standardized and replicable so that different staff members administering the interview seek the same information in approximately the same style.

3. The program offered should contain clear, rational and achievable goals, i.e., the material taught should have relevance to the student's present or near situation and not be about the mythical Scotts who live in a ranch style house in the suburbs with two cars in the garage and two children in high school planning college entry.

4. Measurable progress should be possible, i.e., the student needs clear signals that he is improving.

5. It should be possible for learning to take place from day one, i.e., the placement interview should be so fine-tuned that students can be placed in a learning situation which is just one and only one step beyond their present skill and information level.

6. The teachers should be provided with relevant information about incoming students, but it should be given with the minimal disruption to a lesson in progress, i.e., preferably only a brief introduction of one to the other should take place, so that the student can immediately withdraw from the limelight of self and begin to reach out toward the lesson material and learning. Further background information about any special problems or needs can be supplied to the teacher after class.

7. Lessons should provide orientation to the community. For instance, students need to know how to use the city buses, what services are available, for example, medical clinics, and what services are available but should not be misused, for instance, not calling 911 for a headache. Many students will need instruction in what responsibilities they must attend to, for example, paying rent and utilities, ensuring that their children

attend school and are dressed appropriately for the season.

To summarize: the essential features of a good open enrollment programs are that it should be accessible, have specific and achievable goals, provide needed community orientation, be success oriented, and organized.

Funding Agencies' Needs

Funding agencies have fair needs that must be met too, especially if funding is to continue. Accurate record-keeping is essential. The process can be streamlined, however, so that the student does not find himself giving the same information to two or three different people, or being left waiting endlessly because he is without the language skills to provide information which can be gathered from his camp biodata anyway.

Program Needs

The program needs some protection too from students who take up staff time going patiently through the enrollment procedure and then announce that they cannot start until next week or month. And a system which is only operational in the hands of one particular staff member, makes accurate record-keeping precarious.

Staff Needs

Teachers also have needs if they are to help meet the overall goals of the program. Teachers' needs can be summarized under the following 6 headings:

1. Teachers need to be consciously aware of and appreciate the skills that other staff, both professional and ancillary, bring to their job. They need to be aware of the larger framework of the whole program and particularly aware of the training that

students will receive in the class immediately before theirs. They also need to know what will be expected of their students when they move into the next class, and they need to be aware of the legitimate concerns of their colleagues about individual students.

2. Teachers need information about the general and specific goals of the agency for which they work, i.e., if the trend is toward Vocational ESL, they need time to change the focus of their materials, or if a contract has been cut or lost, real information from the appropriate administrator will help to allay unnecessary panic and give staff the opportunity to reflect on what they need to do.

3. Teachers need the space, time and materials to do their work effectively and creatively, i.e., both learning and teaching is impaired if the room is too small, too hot or too cold, if there are not enough chairs, or if paper work becomes excessive.

4. Teachers need feedback on their teaching, i.e., is what is being taught really helping the student to communicate?

5. Teachers need opportunities for professional growth, i.e., they need the time and support to go to professional meetings. Information sharing on new theories and practices, in-house workshops, out of town speakers all help to stimulate enthusiasm.

6. Teachers benefit from the opportunity for input into the overall program design, program evaluation and goal setting. Professional pride grows from commitment and the respect given to opinions that are professionally sound and incorporated into the program.

To summarize then, students need a program that is easily

accessed, meets their real needs and gives them success. Funding agencies want acountability, that is, a program that hastens the clients towards self sufficiency with a record keeping system that can document its claims. Teachers want the support, time and peace to get on with their work.

Chaos is the potential, however, not because the needs of students, funding agencies and teachers conflict but because of the sheer volume of traffic and the need for constant daily adjustments to the program. A program is in chaos if students are sitting around the hall chatting with their friends instead of being in class because either the class is too full or they perceive the material to be irrelevant to their needs and so feel that there is no point in going to class. A program is in chaos when students wander from class to class if, for instance, the teacher in their class doesn't interest them or have enough chairs or handouts then maybe the teacher next door will have it together. A program is in chaos when the funding agency comes to audit the program and program records are incomplete or do not cross check with other departments'. A program is in chaos when there is a high teacher turn over rate.

A coherent overall program design in which personal and professional concerns are heard and met, can, however, make the difference between holistic, growth-centered unity and chaos.

Enrollment

The enrollment procedure is the first contact that a student has with the program. The unwritten messages that he picks up about the ESL program at that time will often decide for him whether the program will meet his needs, or, more tentatively,

whether he wishes to continue to explore his possibilities there. He needs to know whether this is a place where he is invisible, unimportant and people neither know nor care about his needs so that he will not waste his time there.

At the International Institute, the Receptionist of the Education Department sits just ten feet from the front door and faces it. As the Gatekeeper to the program, she, therefore, has incredible responsibility and power to determine the quality of the first communications that students receive about our program. She needs to know the program very well, and the program priorities, because students rarely arrive one by one. They frequently arrive in families of 6 or more, probably with one or more child crying because the ground which felt so good to his bare feet in South East Asia feels unwelcomingly hard and cold in a St. Louis winter. And before the Receptionist has sorted that family, another group of new students is coming through the door. So she has to be able to practice triage. And even while she is deciding who does what first, she must be communicating with the next group, without breaking her contact with the first, by making friendly eye contact. So, either by words or eye contact, she is sending out a strong message right from the beginning that she has noticed them. She is communicating with them and holding them together. Then they know that they are not invisible. They are in the right place. Although many people may be there, those students know they will receive respect and attention. The first step in bonding the student to the program and establishing the Institute's value system has been made. And the program has taken the first step away from confusion.

After making sure that everyone present is, in fact, waiting to enroll in ESL and not waiting for job referrals or medical aid, evaluation of language skills begins. This is done by a trained ESL professional. The goals of the interview are two-layered:

1. to continue the bonding process by underlining success and communicating acceptance, and
2. to elicit enough background information and language to decide whether the student needs to take a written test, or should be placed without further ado into a beginning level class. If he does need a test, the interview needs to continue until the staff member has heard enough to decide at what level the student should be tested.

As has been described already, the International Institute has several different funding agencies and each needs different information for records. In our core program, however, the primary issue of furthering the bonding process can be combined with the information gathering to continue to build the students' self confidence. Therefore, opening questions are always ones that the student can answer on his or her own without a translator. In this way, the students learn immediately that they can be successful with native speakers in this English-speaking world.

There are certain pieces of information which 99.9% of all refugees CAN communicate even if they have lost everything else. One such informational "fact" is the ability to identify oneself and the other is ability to identify where one comes from. Since it is important to underline what students <u>can</u> do, we therefore

capitalize on that knowledge.

"What's your name?" is the first question asked in a quiet, friendly voice, being sure to maintain eye contact. And as the refugee realizes that he/she has both understood and can answer, a tentative smile appears.

"Where are you from?" is the next question. As they succeed in answering that too, the smile becomes firmer and they usually straighten up a little. The refugees with more than minimal skills will usually at this point begin to tell that after he left country X, he went first to country Y and then to country Z. The super-confident students will often add some time expressions and dependent clauses to their statements. In this way, not only is the bonding taking place, but the act of information sharing is providing valuable insight into the approximate English skill level and the type of language user and learner the student is.

"Show me your I94, please," comes next. If the refugee is from South East Asia, this is a very revealing document. Besides biodata and the A-number, the I94 shows the camp English level, which in turn, can reveal further information about previous education, and learning style. A 40 year old Cambodian male with a camp level A, has probably not been to school in his own country and is not literate in his own language. He is probably going to need special training in learning how to learn before he can begin to benefit from ESL classes and achieve basic literacy in English. A 20 year old male Cambodian with a camp level D, however, has also probably not been to school before the refugee camp, but has probably taught himself enough English BEFORE being placed in class there, and will show himself a fairly

skilled language learner. This young man is probably a good risk-taker, self-motivated, enjoys challenges and can comfortably handle a placement above his present skill level and where literacy is necessary. A little failure will not daunt him. He will actively seek answers rather than waiting for them to become apparent.

If the refugee is literate in English and has the ability to communicate beyond the initial three questions, a 50-question multiple choice test is administered. It comes in three levels and four forms. The student is told beforehand that he is going to take a test. He is also told that he cannot fail the test: everyone passes and there is a class for everyone. The test, he is told, will help to decide which is the best class for him so that he will learn new English and not English that he knows already. He is also told that the test will take approximately 30 minutes and that, at the end of that time, a staff member will tell him what class he will go to and that he will be in class within the hour. Knowing that the evaluation time is finite and that he will shortly be in class regardless of results, seems to alleviate much of the natural test-time jitters and so helps the student provide more reliable information.

Objective discrete point tests have been held in disfavor for a long time. Communicative tests have been advocated instead. The Center for Applied Linguistics, in Virginia, has developed an oral structured interview that tests not only communicative competence, but also linguistic competence, listening comprehension, fluency and pronunciation. In all truth, the ability to read and discriminate between grammatically right

and wrong sentences does not reveal whether a student can communicate verbally, how much he understands of what he hears, or what his pronunciation is like. However, communicative tests are extremely expensive of staff time. The Center for Applied Linguistics' test takes between 20 and 30 minutes for each student. If there are 10 students waiting to enroll, and the class period is three hours, a single staff member can interview and place only 8 students before the class period is over for the day. Two students at least are going to spend the entire period fruitlessly and have to come back the next day - probably feeling somewhat discouraged. Teachers, however, have long found that there is a high positive correlation between the ability to communicate verbally and the score on an objective test. And discrete item tests are beginning to regain professional respectability, as described in a recent Quarterly TESOL (Interrelationships Among Three Tests of Language Proficiency: Standardized ESL, Cloze, and Writing by Edith Hanania and May Shikhani, March 1986). Discrete item tests can be scored with a plastic answer key in approximately 30 seconds by anyone, thereby freeing up the ESL professional for the more sophisticated task of verbal interviewing and evaluation. At the International Institute of St. Louis, objective tests are only used after an oral interview, to support the subjective evaluation of the interview, and to distinguish between the finer shades of competence at each of the three levels, i.e., beginning, intermediate and advanced. Because the same tests are used monthly to measure progress, the newcomer's results, when compared with the monthly progress scores make it possible to see

exactly where in the program there are other students of the same general level of competence. Thus each new student can be placed in a class where he can begin learning immediately and he does not waste lead-in time. This last point is a critical factor in successful placement and will be discussed more fully later.

Information gathered at the interview and after testing is entered on color coded cards which separate students by sex, age and immigration status, and also in an Enrollment Log Book. The last step before placement is to write the student's name exactly as given on his I94 on an adhesive file-folder label together with his test results. He is then taken to class, introduced to the teacher, and his entry to class is completed. The teacher sticks the label on her attendance sheet. In this way students do not get "lost" at audit time because their names have been misspelt. The entire process takes no more than an hour, and many students can be tested at the same time, although they should be given different forms of the same test to prevent cheating.

<u>To summarize: the agency gatekeeper is a critical factor in a smooth and speedy enrollment process. Careful assessment procedures before placement should underline what the student can do and help to make him feel that the program has something of value for him.</u>

<u>Meeting the Needs of Funding Agencies</u>

The record keeping using a double entry, that is, once on a color-coded card and once in a log book, ensures that a variety of data can be assembled for the funding agencies very rapidly. The United Way may want to know the distribution of students by

sex. Our differently colored cards make a head count relatively simple. The federal government may want to know the entire refugee enrollment for the quarter. Our differently colored cards help us to rapidly sort immigrants or visitors from refugees. The State government wants to know the total number of refugee students enrolled each quarter. The log book with students entered in chronological order makes a head count a matter of minutes. Computerized record keeping is our goal for the immediate future and would help with the one governmental question that is still hard to answer at short notice, that is, the number of unduplicated clients in the various programs available.

Record keeping, then, does not have to be elaborate but must reflect the needs of the funding agencies. It must be meticulously kept and all involved in enrollment made accountable for its accuracy.

Attendance

Once a student has been placed in class, an interesting role reversal takes place. The evaluation process is reversed. The student begins to evaluate the program. Students receive no money or material reward for attending class. Students are urged very strongly by the Job Placement Department to attend ESL in order to ensure a good job, but no sanctions are laid on students who do not attend. The students' evaluation of the program's effectiveness can be determined to some extent by examining attendance records which need to be carefully kept. Attendance is measured in days and half days. Patchy attendance with one or two full days out each week is usually a sign that ESL is not

high on that student's priorities although he may be trying to hang in. Students who regularly leave at 11 each morning usually have jobs in restaurants but are finding the program worth the effort of only attending a half-period. Students who do not arrive before 10 in the morning are usually working a late shift but are also showing that they find the program useful. But students who disappear after the first day leave a lot of questions unanswered. Was the class too full, too easy or too difficult? Was the material irrelevant to his perceived needs? Did the student fail to identify with the other students? Was the teaching style off-putting? Or was the problem that caused this disappearance basically with the student and having nothing to do with the program? These are questions that must be addressed by the administrator of the program. Although one expects higher dropout numbers with higher enrollment, the rate should be proportionate to the total enrollment throughout the program. It has been noticed, however, that the rate of dropouts increases in classes of more than 18 students. A solution might seem to be to split the class when this critical mass has been reached and find another teacher. Funding, of course, frequently does not permit that answer. In any event, splitting the class does not usually stem the dropout rate because students moved into the overflow class continue to disappear from the program. However, one answer that works very well at the International Institute is to move into a team-teaching approach with the class teacher setting up the lesson and doing the initial orientation and then splitting the class for short periods into groups using one or more trained volunteers to facilitate the practice

exercises. Maintaining teams of trained volunteer teachers, however, without scheduling them regularly is very difficult because there are many volunteer opportunities available today. If other attractive volunteer opportunities offer regular scheduling, then not only have you lost a volunteer but you have also lost the staff time invested in his/her training. If volunteer teachers are scheduled regularly, then they are not usually available for emergency team teaching. Student attendance figures, however, provide a valuable insight into program effectiveness.

Staff and students need to be clear about what will be taught in the classroom. An overall program curriculum provides everyone with clear goals.

At the International Institute, the staff has developed a structurally based curriculum for each class. These curricula are structurally based because it is our observation that there is a natural order of acquisition of structures based on students' perceived needs. The curricula are cross-referenced with interest or subject areas, such as health, money, housing. From the interest areas, vocabulary items can be drawn. The interest areas are not confined to any one study level, but can be dipped into for content words at any level.

The overall curriculum, although divided up into 8 parts to correspond to the 8 class levels, has to be used fairly flexibly. Each curriculum takes approximately 3 months to complete. Learning, however, is an organic process and cannot be regulated externally by artificially imposed constraints of time. Some students can learn a given fact faster than others. Each

curriculum may take slightly more or less than three months to complete. Flexibility is necessary to meet the individual learning needs of each level. A class that finishes the curriculum early has the option of either going back to the beginning which might be appropriate if there have been many new students added recently, or if it is a cohesive class with a fast learning style, then they may fill the remaining time with items from the beginning of the next curriculum up. But because the general competence level and learning style of each newly reorganized class may vary enormously, the beginning point of each curriculum needs to vary also and respond to student needs.

To summarize: teaching goals need to be clear to staff and students but should also allow for variations of learning style.

Testing

Effective management of the random fluctuations either up or down in class numbers is essential in order:

1. To provide an environment suitable for learning.
2. To prevent the erosion of student confidence in the program's ability to meet student needs.
3. To protect the teachers from the frustration of being unable to meet student needs.

Progress testing on a regular basis is a powerful tool in maintaining smooth student flow through the program, regulating the fluctuations in class numbers caused by open enrollment and giving the teachers feedback on their month's teaching, besides providing goals for the coming month.

At the International Institute, all students are tested monthly. Since the tests are discrete item, and can be scored

with a plastic key very rapidly, the task of administering, scoring and rank-ordering the results for a class of sixteen students can be accomplished in approximately one hour. Four forms of each test exist, so that five months elapse before a student might see the same test again. The likelihood, therefore, of students memorizing the test is slight. Very tight security is used to ensure that no tests are taken home for "studying". Each student's paper is back-scored with his results for the previous three months. Each student's score is evaluated in two contexts: his score in relation to those of his fellow class members, and his score in relation to his own four-month progress profile. Some students do occasionally take the test the easy way and copy down the choices of the student next to them. This becomes quickly apparent when the score is compared to his general progress profile. An example of a questionable student score might be if he got 38 this month but the previous 3 months show scores of 23, 24, 26. It might be a valid score and this can be ascertained from the class teacher, but it is more often an indication of disaffection. Some students will occasionally just "blow" the test. Usually, at an interview with the student later, he will welcome the opportunity to recoup himself. Immediately after scoring is completed, the results are typed by rank order and a mean and standard deviation run on each class. This statistical formula is often sufficient to separate out the students who are significantly outperforming their peers and should be moved on. Sometimes, however, it is valuable to plot the scores on a graph. The visual representation of the results laid out on one graph can show very clearly where and how many

student scores are overlapping those of students in the next class up. Because students and teachers learn more from immediate feedback, within 24 hours a list needs to be compiled of those students in each class whose results show them to be ready for promotion. Each teacher needs to receive a xerox copy of the "promotion list" and have the right to add names to or delete names from it. By having the entire list, the teachers can see not only who will move up but also, which students they will receive. Those students, who demonstrably either by test results and/or teacher recommendation are ready to move up, are, at the beginning of the next week, conducted to their new class. Some students refuse to move. They are then told that it is the professional judgment of the teacher that they are ready to move but they can stay one more month if they wish. However, they have to realize that they will be practicing again skills that they already know. Some weaken at that point and move. Some firmly stay. However, it is a rare student who elects to do that more than once. The overall test results provide information to guide the placement of new students. By comparing the scores of incoming students with those of students already in the program that month, an accurate placement can be made that will ensure that the student is with others at the same ESL level. In this way, the new student will neither have to practice again what he already knows nor is so far behind the other students that he is lost. Learning of new material can start from the moment he enters the classroom.

An error analysis of each student's individual responses will reveal further valuable information which can be used to

customize the curriculum for the needs of each particular class. From this error analysis sheet, it is possible to see where the errors are clustering, and these error clusters can be used as the basis for the upcoming month's teaching points providing they are appropriate to the class' skill level.

To summarize: a planned system of testing is valuable because:

1. Testing gives the students feedback on their efforts and gives positive reinforcement to learning achievements.
2. Testing gives the teachers objective criteria for evaluating their students.
3. Testing gives the teachers feedback on their own classroom effectiveness.
4. Testing of new students and comparing their results with those of students already in the program ensure that accurate class placements are made and that new arrivals can start learning from Day 1 with the maximum likelihood of success and the minimum disruption to the ongoing class.
5. From error analyses of the test results, teachers can determine very explicit study goals for the upcoming month.
6. Testing gives the administration an objective method for controlling student "flow" through the program.
7. Factual information about student progress through the program can be supplied to funding agencies.

Students learn best in an environment in which their perceived needs are being met, where class goals are clearly defined, where the teacher facilitates learning as opposed to instructing mechanically, and where progress through the program

is non-threatening because of the obvious overall programmatic cohesion and overlapping curricula between classes. Progress testing is a very powerful tool for measuring the effectiveness of both teaching and learning and provides impetus to each.

Of all the factors in program design and management mentioned, that is, student enrollment procedures, curriculum, the uses of testing, and cohesion within the overall program, effective staffing is probably the most critical. The teachers are the channel through which the administration manages and monitors the program. The teachers are the information and care providers for the students. And the students' communication chain back to administration is often through the teachers.

Finding good teachers is difficult. Finding good teachers of ESL is considerably more difficult. Finding good teachers of adult refugee ESL is exceptionally difficult because the skills necessary to succeed are so many and so diverse. Therefore, much thought and care needs to be given to recruiting good staff and the maintenance of staff morale.

Recent training in ESL methodologies, second language acquisition theories and basic pedagogy are clearly a valuable assets. But two other factors are of equal if not over-riding importance: relevant experience and a manifest willingness to learn more. A good teacher has many of the characteristics of the good language learner: she is a risk-taker, she learns from her own errors, she concentrates on the task and is not side-tracked by irrelevancies, she wants to adapt to the needs of her students. She is able to prioritize the roles of error correction, communication, consistency, dependence and

independence. She is excited by her job. She updates both her methods and theories of language teaching and learning so that she conserves her energies by not reinventing the wheel. The students find her exciting, competent and supportive. The students know that such a teacher will always have something to pique their interest, will take them slowly and clearly through the learning stages of a new language skill, and, at the end, give the students the appropriate environment and support to practice what they have learned. She promotes self-sufficiency for the students by providing them with the opportunity to practice independently and even permit mistakes if that will provide a learning experience for the students. And although each teacher has distinctive features about her teaching style, each teacher will also recognize that there are over-riding principles in teaching ESL to adults. Thus, the students can move easily from class to class when they are ready without being jarred by a radical change of method.

Since maintaining the cohesion of a small staff is essential, recruiting for new staff should be undertaken thoughtfully and with procedures that will ensure that factors relevant to a good staff "match" become apparent. The letter of application and resume can reveal not only experience and education, but also omissions, job-hopping tendencies, aesthetic standards and ability to respond relevantly to an advertisement. Open-ended interview techniques, in which the applicant has the opportunity to talk about her basic approach to teaching and to adult students in general, will help to give an added dimension to the specific details of training and experience. A mini-

demonstration lesson, although a rather artificial classroom performance, can nevertheless reveal much about the applicant's attitude towards students, organization of material and the type of classroom dynamics that she can generate.

A good staff needs an environment which promotes the development of personal and professional cohesion. No matter how limited the space, each staff member is going to do a better job if certain house-keeping tasks are assured. Teachers need a place to work and reference books, materials and duplicating facilities readily available. Classroom space should be adequate for the number of students and sufficient tables, desks or chairs provided. A good, large blackboard with an adequate supply of good chalk is essential. Lighting, heating and cooling should meet the students' real needs, and not be the result of an architect's theoretical equation. Bonding is important for teachers too. Good teachers like to talk about their work and although time between classes is usually very limited, a supply of tea and coffee somewhere central to the desk area helps to provide an opportunity for sharing professional and personal interests and promotes the development of that spirit of community that is essential for good staff relationships. The staff need the opportunity not only to hear about each other's concerns but also about those of the supervisor and the agency. A common fallacy exists that if the supervisor leaves her office door open, staff have ready access to her. In fact, crossing the supervisor's threshold requires a certain aggressiveness that some staff will hesitate to undertake. The supervisor will usually ensure greater sharing with the staff if she visits the

staff area. Good teachers like feedback on their teaching and a visit from the supervisor, planned well beforehand and with the definite goal of observing the lesson not the teacher, is usually welcome and provides an opportunity for professional endorsement and growth besides stimulating a discussion of professional and agency-related goals. It is important too, that the supervisor remain professionally growth oriented and resilient enough to undertake policy changes and implement them if appropriate.

Because, however, the teachers are the communicators - from the director through the curriculum to the students, and from the students through the progress testing to the director, the decision as to leadership style is critical.

There are many diverse leadership styles ranging from autocratic - the "there is one way and only one way: MY WAY", to the perpetually critical, as in, "I know you got your back scores, error analysis and syllabus update in, but where are your monthly sign-in sheets?" to management by objectives. Combined with a facilitative mode, an example of this last approach at the weekly staff meeting would be, "Looking at this month's error analysis, exactly what can be done this month in each classroom?" The facilitative leader will try to make it possible for experienced teachers to do what they do so well and do it to the best of their abilities. With such skilled professionals, the supervisor's time is much better spent on examining overall issues and diagnosing problem areas and asking for alternative solutions from those who will implement them. They are in a better position than administration to know what their students need to learn and if the teachers do not know, then they need to

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learn how to make this judgment. New teachers to the program, although excellent at teaching and good communicators, usually have different styles of teaching and different pacing. Priorities in one class are not the same in the next class. Students who move to a class where the priorities are different, waste time discovering how the new value system works. Working with an autocratic leadership model, the administrator can go from one to class instructing the teachers about the importance of teaching style uniformity and pointing out exactly what is wrong or incompatible. Or, using a facilitative model, the administrator can encourage projects which require each teacher to work closely with her colleagues, make classroom visits, share ideas and jointly determine curriculum goals. This will help teachers to examine their own work and style and implement changes, which will ensure program cohesion and promote a spirit of commitment to the overall program.

Three ongoing activities at the International Institute ensure close interaction between staff members and stimulate self-evaluation:

1. Volunteer training

Volunteers are trained in one on one situations by the classroom teachers. Only one volunteer is in each room at a time. She spends 2 mornings observing the class teacher. During this period, she completes a Guided Observation form. These forms are designed to help a volunteer focus on the important features of the lesson, e.g., how did the teacher make her meaning clear? Pictures, realia, explanation; or all the students were interested, most of the students

were distracted(circle one) etc. In other words, each class teacher has to pay particular attention to her own techniques partly from a natural sense of pride but also because she knows that the volunteer will soon be mirroring those same techniques in her own classroom.

2. Monthly Progress Testing

Testing undertaken for the sole purpose of fulfilling a need for routine statistics, is usually self-defeating. At that point, testing becomes a bureaucratic issue and tempts sabotage. Testing for feedback, however, both for teachers and students, provides each with a quantifiable endorsement of community effort and pedagogical creativity. As the data becomes available from the test results and it becomes clear where class scores overlap those of the classes above and below, where groupings occur within a class, where a graphic representation of the scores shows a fairly flat curve but higher than the curve of the previous month indicating that all the students in that class have been caught up in the teaching/learning process, then the teachers can see for themselves the results of their efforts and can make their own evaluation of their performance.

3. Monthly Goal Setting

An examination of the data from the student scores in rank order, in comparison with the performance of previous months, and in graph form provide feedback on the teaching/learning results of the previous month. But it is the error analysis that helps to clarify the goals for the coming month. As a group activity, the staff can determine their own goals for the coming month and in this way, develop a responsibility and commitment toward the

overall program.

The following points, under the headings of facilitative issues and management by objects, are essential in developing a cohesive, goal-oriented staff:

Facilitative

1. Practical support must be readily available, e.g., equipment in working order, up-to-date books and adequate supplies.

2. Communication about issues affecting the agency must be updated regularly, e.g., the way that new legislation will affect agency funding.

3. The administrator must be readily accessible to staff both to give information and to receive feedback about issues that are affecting them in the classroom.

4. Lessons should be observed often enough for the teacher to know that the administrator is interested in what and how students are being taught. It is important to ask the teacher if the planned observation is convenient beforehand. If there is something good going on, praise it, but visit and observe the lesson not the teacher.

5. Professional growth should be emphasized and support provided for attending conferences, having teachers give in-house presentations on new developments in the field.

Management by Objectives

6. Goals should be determined from performance testing, i.e., the students need to be able to demonstrate what they have been taught to do. In this way, the teachers take responsibility for their own goal setting.

7. Regular meetings with an explicit agenda and time frame

should be established. Representatives from each section of the program, including administration, teachers, volunteers and support staff, should provide input on current issues and developments. Time should be provided for appropriate questions and discussion. Decisions, as much as possible, should be by consensus.

8. Annual evaluations, where used, should include mutually agreed upon goals, and be tied to raises.

The leadership style must, however, match the staff needs. Where a staff at one time might respond well to a supportive leadership style, another staff might need more structure and without it, will feel lost and angry at the lack of direction. Each supervisor must make an evaluation of staff needs and consider also what he/she is ABLE to bring to the position. The bottom line however, is that the supervisor can design the program, establish procedures and stand accountable, but she can only implement it fully with a cohesive and well-trained staff.

In summary, open enrollment/open exit and chaos do not necessarily follow each other. The steps to coherent and constructive management however, require exquisitely careful organization and are full of conflicts. The program Gatekeeper has great responsibility and power but must use it, not show it to diminish people. Haste must be made to acknowledge the presence of each individual but he must not be needlessly hastened as he struggles to display some initiative in using his language skills. The program must have clearly developed and functional evaluation systems for the students, but after

placement, the student will evaluate the program and reflect back the value of the program by his presence or absence. Testing is essential to the management of the fluctuating class numbers but it is not only a tool for reorganization but also provides information for establishing learning goals. Achievement goes to the risk-takers. And program strength and stability is only achieved by a staff willing and able to operate a planned and ongoing system of self-evaluation to ensure that the program addresses the changing needs of the students.